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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PPD, NEA/P, AND INR/R/MR

LONDON FOR TSOU

PARIS FOR ZEYA

USCENTCOM FOR PLUSH

FOREIGN PRESS CENTER FOR SILAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [OIIP](#) [IZ](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: REFERENDUM IN IRAQ

In Order To Form A More Perfect Union

[1](#)1. "Oman," the government-owned Arabic daily, ran an editorial on October 17 entitled "After The Iraqi Constitution":

"An unofficial announcement suggests that sixty-six percent of the Iraqi people have approved a constitutional referendum, despite overwhelming opposition from Sunni Arabs. If (as declared by Secretary of State Rice) this unofficial result is true, then elections in December will replace the transitional administration with a four-year parliament and the first permanent government since the 2003 invasion. If Washington is serious about Iraq's political process, there needs to be a timetable for the withdrawal of all American troops from Iraq. We realize that the constitution is not a magic document. But what gives life to a constitution is the political will of those who achieve the power to implement its provisions."

Ensure Domestic Tranquility

[1](#)2. The privately owned Arabic daily "al-Watan" published an editorial on October 14 entitled "Steps Toward A New Iraq":

"There are a number of milestones that will mark Iraq's progress. The first step is the withdrawal of foreign troops according to a timetable that should be agreed upon by all parties. The second step is for the public to agree on a permanent constitution that satisfies the ambitions and inclinations of all groups in Iraq, in preparation for the establishment of a democratic regime. The third step will be to cleanse Iraq of the armed groups that target civilians and who seek to impose their will from the barrel of a gun. These steps are the only way for Iraq to escape the political deterioration and instability that still cause the deaths of many innocent people each day. . . Clearly, all Iraqis should take part in this referendum to lay the foundation stone for the construction of a new, independent, and unified Iraq - with an Arab identity."

Promote The General Welfare

[1](#)3. "Oman" featured an editorial on October 15 entitled "A Decisive Day For The Future Of Iraq And The Region":

"Millions of Iraqis will vote today on the referendum for the new Iraqi Constitution. Despite the hot disputes about some of its provisions, in the end the constitution is a formula for coexistence between different groups. This referendum is exceedingly important for the future of Iraq, particularly in light of the current violent circumstances. . . It is important and necessary that Iraqis vote today for the sake of unity, progress, and the re-creation of life. This shall enable Iraq to undermine any evil plans that seek to drive the country into an endless dark tunnel."

BALTIMORE